

FAITH COMMENT ARTICLE

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Life and Hope

What's your name? Our names are important to us; we can be quite upset if someone gets our name wrong or really pleased if someone remembers it!

Have you ever been – or perhaps you are at the moment – in a place of darkness, despair, grief, emptiness and confusion?

It may be at the loss of a loved one, or a treasured object, or a job; it may be arising from illness for you or a loved one; it may be at the state of a world of conflict, disaster, and climate change.

One word in the recent celebrations of Easter reminds us that to God this is not just global or cosmic it is also personal.

At the first Easter there were many people for whom life was empty, dark and confused and the only emotion they could identify was grief. Jesus had died an agonising, criminal's death on Friday; he'd been buried in a hurry and early on Sunday morning just a few of his followers had gone to the tomb to grieve and do what they could that they hadn't time for on Friday.

One of them stayed alone outside the tomb weeping and met a man she supposed to be the gardener who asked why she was crying. I suspect she wanted to shout at him, 'why do you think I'm crying? you'd be crying after what I've been through and now his body's been taken away.'

'Mary' he said. That's the turning point. He called her by name; He calls us by name.

This is personal.

In the midst of your confusion, darkness, despair, emptiness and grief this is personal – he calls you by name.

There is hope; there is life; he is with you; he calls you by name.